

By: Parker

H.B. No. 3171

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the amount of instruction time required for driver training.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Section 1001.001, Education Code, is amended by adding Subdivision (3-a) to read as follows:

(3-a) "Course hour" means 50 minutes of classroom or in-car instruction, as applicable, within a 60-minute period.

SECTION 2. Section 1001.101(b), Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

(b) A driver education course must require the student to complete:

(1) seven course [7] hours of behind-the-wheel instruction in the presence of a person who holds a driver education instructor license or who meets the requirements for a driver education course conducted by a parent or other individual under Section 1001.112;

(2) seven course [7] hours of observation instruction in the presence of a person who holds a driver education instructor license or who meets the requirements for a driver education course conducted by a parent or other individual under Section 1001.112; and

(3) 30 course hours of behind-the-wheel instruction, including at least 10 course hours of instruction that takes place

1 at night, in the presence of an adult who meets the requirements of  
2 Section 521.222(d)(2), Transportation Code.

3 SECTION 3. Section 1001.1015(b), Education Code, is amended  
4 to read as follows:

5 (b) A driver education course under Subsection (a) must:

6 (1) consist of six [~~be a six-hour~~] course hours; and

7 (2) include instruction in:

8 (A) alcohol and drug awareness;

9 (B) the traffic laws of this state;

10 (C) highway signs, signals, and markings that  
11 regulate, warn, or direct traffic; and

12 (D) the issues commonly associated with motor  
13 vehicle accidents, including poor decision-making, risk taking,  
14 impaired driving, distraction, speed, failure to use a safety belt,  
15 driving at night, failure to yield the right-of-way, and using a  
16 wireless communication device while operating a vehicle.

17 SECTION 4. Section 1001.111(b), Education Code, is amended  
18 to read as follows:

19 (b) A driving safety course designed for drivers younger  
20 than 25 years of age must:

21 (1) consist of four course hours and be a [~~four-hour~~]  
22 live, interactive course focusing on issues specific to drivers  
23 younger than 25 years of age;

24 (2) include instruction in:

25 (A) alcohol and drug awareness;

26 (B) the traffic laws of this state;

27 (C) the high rate of motor vehicle accidents and

1 fatalities for drivers younger than 25 years of age;

2 (D) the issues commonly associated with motor  
3 vehicle accidents involving drivers younger than 25 years of age,  
4 including poor decision-making, risk taking, impaired driving,  
5 distraction, speed, failure to use a safety belt, driving at night,  
6 failure to yield the right-of-way, and using a wireless  
7 communication device while operating a vehicle, and the role of  
8 peer pressure in those issues;

9 (E) the effect of poor driver decision-making on  
10 the family, friends, school, and community of a driver younger than  
11 25 years of age; and

12 (F) the importance of taking control of  
13 potentially dangerous driving situations both as a driver and as a  
14 passenger; and

15 (3) require a written commitment by the student to  
16 family and friends that the student will not engage in dangerous  
17 driving habits.

18 SECTION 5. Section [1001.112\(a\)](#), Education Code, is amended  
19 to read as follows:

20 (a) The commission by rule shall provide for approval of a  
21 driver education course conducted by the parent, stepparent, foster  
22 parent, legal guardian, grandparent, or step-grandparent of a  
23 person who is required to complete a driver education course to  
24 obtain a Class C license. The rules must provide that the student  
25 driver spend a minimum number of course hours in classroom and  
26 behind-the-wheel instruction and that the person conducting the  
27 course:

1           (1) possess a valid license for the preceding three  
2 years that has not been suspended, revoked, or forfeited in the past  
3 three years for an offense that involves the operation of a motor  
4 vehicle;

5           (2) has not been convicted of:

6                 (A) criminally negligent homicide; or

7                 (B) driving while intoxicated;

8           (3) is not disabled because of mental illness; and

9           (4) does not have six or more points assigned to the  
10 person's driver's license under Subchapter B, Chapter 708,  
11 Transportation Code, at the time the person begins conducting the  
12 course.

13           SECTION 6. The changes in law made by this Act apply to a  
14 driver training course that begins on or after the effective date of  
15 this Act. A driver training course that begins before the effective  
16 date of this Act is governed by the law in effect on the date the  
17 course began, and the former law is continued in effect for that  
18 purpose.

19           SECTION 7. This Act takes effect September 1, 2017.